

## Week 02: Establishing the Win & Redefining Community (Leader's Guide)

### Why is it important to establish the win for you group early?

Without vision, people perish. If your group doesn't know what the vision/win is, then it will most likely not be successful. The ultimate win for your group is **love for another, authentic community, and multiplication**. This is the mission that Jesus left us with, to love one another (John 13:35), be a part of community (Acts 2:42-47), and go make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). It is important to establish these things as the win early and continually keep it in front of your group. Defining success for your group is the most important thing you can do. We believe that the byproduct of these 3 things is deep spiritual growth and evangelism.

### Why is it important to redefine people's idea of community?

It is important to understand that every person in your group will come in with experiences and ideas that have shaped their view of what community is. Some of these will be right and some will be wrong. Use the opening question about their church experience to help get a grasp on some of these preconceived ideas. Then, focus on the goal of this session which is helping them see what community is and how it plays out in the Bible. Acts 2 will give you a great picture of what this looks like. Most people's experiences with church will not be what we see in Acts 2 and it will give you a great opportunity to refresh and redefine what the church could be. Striving after this biblical picture of community will be the catalyst for God changing lives in your Community Group.

### What is community?

Community exists when a small group of imperfect people commit to walk through life together with the common purpose of knowing Jesus and making Him known. In Acts 2:42-47, we get the biblical picture of this type of authentic community. Notice the three overarching components that make this up: **encounter, transformation, and mission**. These people were focused on **encountering Jesus** together in a real way. Their encounter led to a **transformed life**. Transformed lives embrace the **mission** of God. That mission is to make all things new through radical discipleship to Jesus Christ. This is what Community Groups are all about and can look like for us.

### What are some of the biggest challenges in establishing community?

Two of the greatest challenges when it comes to establishing community are **commitment** and **honesty**. Where either of these dynamics are lacking, it is hard to create community. Community takes commitment, because it requires trust and trust takes time. As a leader, talk about commitment often and model what it looks like to show up consistently and faithfully. The second challenge is **honesty**. Honesty, along with the power of the Holy Spirit, is powerful. However, honesty requires trust and sometimes trust is a difficult thing to develop with people. There are few things that can help with this. Honesty starts with you as the leader. Set the tone by being honest yourself, and your group will follow suit. Pray for honesty and look for ways to catalyze relationships in your group. The deeper the relationships, the more honest people will be. Lastly and most importantly, talk about the gospel as much as possible. The gospel frees us up to be honest and not okay, because God's love for us is secure in Christ.

## Week 02: Establishing the Win & Redefining Community (Discussion Guide)

**Goal for Week 02:** *Members will gain an understanding of biblical community and what their part in it is.*

**Start Group with Meal Time (30min):** Meal time is an informal time to start off the Community Group. During this time of sharing a meal your group will discuss what's going on in life and have time to learn more about one another.

**Share Time:** Use this time to have your group members share what they have been learning in scripture and what they have been hearing from God. Ask your group: *what has the Lord been revealing to you in your quiet time? (This is a low pressure question. It can be from the book of the Bible your group chose to read together. **Remember** and **remind** everyone that there is no condemnation in Christ, no shame for those who struggled to read/hear this week. **Celebrate** those that encountered God in the scriptures that week. **Encourage** those that didn't to keep taking small steps forward. As you grow closer as a group, these answers will deepen.)*

### Opening Questions:

1. How would you describe your church experience in the past? Good or Bad? Explain. *(Be sure to guard against "bad mouthing" other churches. We are all on the same team. This is not about other churches – this question is directed at a person's expectancy, value placed on, and openness to the gathering of believers.)*
2. What is the closest-knit group of people that you have ever been affiliated with? What characteristics made that group so close?
3. What does success look like for a Community Group? How do we know if we've won?

**Scripture:** Acts 2:42-47 : Read this passage together and focus on what the disciples' community looked like.

### Text Questions:

1. What do you notice about this group of people?
2. What does it mean to be devoted to something?
3. What were they devoted to? Discuss each one individually.
  - a. Verse 42: What does it look like to be devoted to God's word?
  - b. Verse 42: What does it look like to be devoted to each other (fellowship)?
  - c. Verse 42: What does it look like to be devoted to remembering Christ (breaking of bread)?
  - d. Verse 42: What does it look like to be devoted to prayer?
  - e. Verse 44: What does it look like to be devoted to serving, sharing possessions and generously meeting needs for *anyone* (those inside and outside of their group)?
  - f. Verses 45-46: What does it look like to be devoted to regularly meeting together, sharing meals together, and being sincere?

g. Verse 47: What does it look like to be devoted to worshiping together?

**Reflection & Application Questions:**

1. What does this look like for us?
2. From the list above, what will be potentially challenging for this Community Group to be devoted to?
3. How can this group make an effort to immediately address potential challenges?

**Prayer Time:** Share with each other about that one person who you know that needs to hear the gospel. Pray for that person.