

Theme: God calls His people to growth in their relationships with one another, building a close knit community centered around Christ.

I. Intro – Focal Point 2013

- A. 2013 Focal Point - Growing As A Community of Prayer
- B. I am really excited about this - community and prayer
- C. Teaching, articles, aids, activities all year to grow
- D. Working with kids in prayer & relationships
- E. Begin by teaching on our key verses for the year
- F. Please work to memorize these verses

II. The Importance of Community

- A. The context - the church as community (Matt 18:15-18)
 - 1. Dealing with sin between believers (v15)
 - 2. Against you - relationships in the community
 - 3. Critical because at heart, church is a community
- B. Community in our text
 - 1. Two of you (v19); two or three (v20)
 - 2. Plurals - they, them (v19); them (v20)
 - 3. Gathered, among them (v20) - actual gathering in view

III. The Nature of Christian Community

- A. Christian community is not determined or driven by size
 - 1. Note “two of you” (v19); “two or three” (v20)
 - 2. Eccles. 4:9-12 - power of community; two or three

- 3. Judaism required 10 males - Jesus says two believers
 - 4. Our culture often glories in size - billions served!
 - 5. Size does not mean quality; may show compromise
 - 6. Real community requires limited size
 - 7. Size is not bad - but it is not paramount
- B. Christian community requires agreement
 - 1. Two of you agree - a basis for community
 - 2. Symphonew - we get symphony from this word
 - 3. Not identical - but playing together
 - 4. Not on everything - but must be agreement
- C. Christian community requires physically gathering
 - 1. Where two or three are gathered (v19)
 - 2. He is among them - part of the gathered group (v19)
 - 3. This is actually getting together - not chat rooms!
- D. Christian community is centered on Jesus
 - 1. In my Name (v19) - under His authority; focused on Him
 - 2. Christ centered - not just a motto - must be reality
 - 3. Everything else in the church must flow from this
- E. Christian community is filled with the Presence of Jesus
 - 1. There am I among them (v19) - His Presence
 - 2. He is Alive and dwells among His people

3. Quote on Divine Presence with 2 or 3 (m. Abot 3:2)
4. Jesus is Divine - and He is with us!
5. A “church” without Jesus’ Presence is not a church!

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Am I building community - or just attending?
 1. Jesus is building a community - not a meeting
 2. Jesus gives us the great promise of His Presence
 3. We need Jesus - and each other
 4. But this only comes with real community
 5. Am I building real community with other believers?
- B. Communion - Jesus with His community
 1. Jesus is here to meet with us today
 2. He has been here with us
 3. We recognize Him in the breaking of the bread
 4. Come to Jesus and receive!

Growing As A Community

Matthew 18:19-20 ESV

February 3, 2013

Communion

Romans 15:5-6

9 **Two** are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him 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

“But if two sit together and words of the Law are spoken between them, the Divine Presence rests between them.”

m. 'Abot 3:2