

## RI.C6. Community and Fellowship

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

### Learning Objectives

1. The children will recognize that the community and fellowship of God's children provides strength and security.
2. The children will explore the concept of working together in the community of the congregation in order to help God's work to grow.

**Memory Verse:**            *"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."  
--1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIRV)*

### Getting Started

(Choose One Activity)

#### "Strength in Numbers"

See: [www.teensundayschool.com](http://www.teensundayschool.com) → activities → "Strength in Numbers"

You will need about 8 to 10 volunteers to help with this challenge. You will lie flat on the floor, and then ask the volunteers one by one to try to pick you up off the floor. It is okay if it causes a laugh or two, but none of them should be able to lift you up. (You may want to stop after three or four attempts.) Please see the above website for detailed instructions and a guide to the discussion.

#### "Become All Things" Object Talk

See: [www.kidssundayschool.com](http://www.kidssundayschool.com) → grade school → object talks → "Become All Things"

You will need to bring in a folding lawn chair to class. Please see the above website for detailed instructions and a guide to the discussion.

Conclusion: A lawn chair does not actually become a fine piece of furniture, or a park bench. Likewise, the Apostle Paul did not change into a Gentile when he was witnessing to the Gentiles. However, he knew they needed to hear the good news about God and His Son in a way they would understand. This is what Paul did, and this is somewhat how the lawn chair works. It gives us what we need at the time, without really changing. That is why to me, the lawn chair is so special. It reminds me of how I should help others learn about God, even when they are different from me.

### Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions

**Message:**

***Gather and grow.***

Note: Use your chart paper or white board to make the following lists together. Give children opportunities to get up and write. Use questions to prompt them to come up with the following information.

## Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – Continued

<u>What Groups do you belong to?</u>	<u>Benefits of Groups to us:</u>	<u>What can we do to develop a positive community in our church?</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family</li> <li>- Circle of friends</li> <li>- A class at school</li> <li>- Congregation</li> <li>- Etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide protection and help</li> <li>- Provide care and security</li> <li>- Provide joint discussions and activities</li> <li>- Provide a sense of belonging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pray for others</li> <li>- Be considerate of others</li> <li>- Forgive ALL others and do not bear a grudge</li> <li>- Talk about our faith and experiences</li> <li>- Do our best to bring joy to others</li> <li>- Visit the sick</li> </ul>

You may want to have the children brainstorm a 4<sup>th</sup> list on paper regarding what they can do in the congregational community:

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Visit the brothers and sisters who are sick
- Make gifts for the elderly or sick
- Decorate the altar beautifully
- Bake cookies and share them with the congregation
- Etc.

*NOTE: Let the ideas come from the children. Offer one or two as examples if needed, but do your best to pull the ideas out of their creative minds. Encourage them to think outside the box.*

**You will need to bring in a picture of the human body – from a book, a print out, a poster, etc. Show it to the children and tell them that we will need it for our Bible reading today. SAY: “For today’s lesson on community and fellowship, we are going to look into the New Testament again and see what we can find. Let’s look up and read together”:**

### **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**

<sup>12</sup> There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ. <sup>13</sup> We were all baptized by one Holy Spirit into one body. It didn't matter whether we were Jews or Greeks, slaves or free people. We were all given the same Spirit to drink.

<sup>14</sup> The body is not made up of just one part. It has many parts. <sup>15</sup> Suppose the foot says, "I am not a hand. So I don't belong to the body." It is still part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And suppose the ear says, "I am not an eye. So I don't belong to the body." It is still part of the body.

<sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, how could it hear? If the whole body were an ear, how could it smell? <sup>18</sup> God has placed each part in the body just as he wanted it to be. <sup>19</sup> If all the parts were the same, how could there be a body? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts. But there is only one body.

<sup>21</sup> The eye can't say to the hand, "I don't need you!" The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you!" <sup>22</sup> In fact, it is just the opposite. The parts of the body that seem to be weaker are the ones we can't do without. <sup>23</sup> The parts that we think are less important we treat with special honor. The private parts aren't shown. But they are treated with special care. <sup>24</sup> The parts that can be shown don't need special care.

## **Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – Continued**

But God has joined together all the parts of the body. And he has given more honor to the parts that didn't have any. <sup>25</sup> In that way, the parts of the body will not take sides. All of them will take care of each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part shares in its joy.

<sup>27</sup> You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How does the illustration of the human body give insights into the body of Christ in this passage? (*There are many parts to it, but it is one unit*)
2. Verse 15 uses humor to illustrate a part of the body seeking not to belong...can it do it? (*no...when you're a part of the body, you just belong to it*)
3. How does verse 26 relate to the church?
4. Look at verse 27. What does it mean to you?

It should be noted that in verse 27, the “you” is plural...he’s talking to the whole group. Then, in the last part of that verse, he acknowledges that we are individuals that are part of the group. But we shouldn’t have our own concerns at the front of our minds—the good of the group comes first. After all, when one part of the body hurts, we all hurt.

## **Application to Real Life**

In order to be a part of this “community” and fellowship in the congregation, there are two main things that are required of us in being a member of our community:

- 1. GATHER**
- 2. GROW**

### Gather:

One of the biggest responsibilities if you want to be a member of the church community is to show up. We are expected to gather together. That is part of what makes us a community.

Look up together in the Bible **Hebrews 10:25** and read it as a class:

*“Let us not give up meeting together. Some are in the habit of doing this. Instead, let us cheer each other up with words of hope. Let us do it all the more as you see the day coming when Christ will return.” (NIRV)*

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think the author of Hebrews urges people to meet together?
2. In this text, some have given up on that habit...how is it easy to do that?
3. How often do you gather with the congregational community? What priority do you think it takes in your life and schedule?

If you want to belong to a family, it’s expected you reside at home. If you want to belong to a team or a club, you have to go to practices and meetings. If you want to belong to the church, it makes sense that you would gather with other believers and be with the congregation.

You may be busy, but here’s challenge number one—be with the church. Gather with others who believe in God and do that as often as possible.

## Application to Real Life – Continued

### Grow:

You also have to grow. You have to grow in two ways: grow individually and help the church grow too. Look up in your Bibles together and read **Acts 2:43-47**.

*<sup>43</sup> Everyone felt that God was near. The apostles did many wonders and miraculous signs. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together. They shared everything they had. <sup>45</sup> They sold what they owned. They gave each other everything they needed. <sup>46</sup> Every day they met together in the temple courtyard. In their homes they broke bread and ate together. Their hearts were glad and honest and true. <sup>47</sup> They praised God. They were respected by all the people. Every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.*

### Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways did the individual members of the church attempt to grow, according to this passage? *(They shared, they broke bread, they were glad and sincere in heart, they praised God and had a good reputation with people, etc.)*
2. In what ways do you attempt to grow in your own spiritual life?
3. How is gathering with the congregation a part of this growth? Are they related?
4. How is each individual member responsible for their own growth?
5. With all these individuals attempting to grow, what was the end result, according to verse 47? *(The Lord added to the church.)*

When individuals commit to growing in their own walk with God (through some of the stuff we've talked about like Bible study, prayer, etc.), the whole church grows. People are added to it, and the church becomes more effective in accomplishing its mission to reach and teach others about God and His work. Remember, the job of the church is to gather and grow.

## Memory Work Suggestions

5 minutes

1. Recite the memory verse.
2. Practice finding the memory verse and/or Bible text in their Bible!
3. Play a game to review an article of faith (toss the bean bag/stuffed animal, the person who catches it says the next word...try to go faster and faster).
4. Allow a volunteer (child) to lead the class in an opening/closing prayer.

## Activity Ideas

Choose One Activity

### The Tortoise and the Hare (turtle and rabbit)

See: [www.teensundayschool.com](http://www.teensundayschool.com) → lessons → "Victory in Christ - Christian Partnership" → scroll down the page to the story.

#### Alternate Discussion Questions:

1. Who would you consider your partners? (These might be teammates, family members, or close friends.)
2. What about being partners is difficult? *(Sometimes its disagreements, selfishness, and lack of unity that leads to rocky partnerships.)*

SO, there is strength that comes from working together with others toward a common goal. Isn't this what a community is? *(Discuss together.)*

## **Activity Ideas – Continued**

### **“Class Project”**

Work together as a class group to come up with and plan an activity that would allow the class to contribute to and benefit the congregational community. This can be completed over the next few weeks, but should be done BEFORE the holiday season. Let the children come up with the idea, and guide THEM to make the plans. You (the teacher) be the facilitator or coach.

## **Journal Reflection Questions**

- If you could do anything for God knowing that you could not fail, what would you do? Write about it.
- What do you dream about doing for God and His work that for some reason you haven't done yet? How can you make your dream a reality? What/Who do you need to help you? Write about it.
- What (if anything) is stopping YOU from serving the Lord? Think about it first. Then write about it.

## **Homework Ideas**

- Read the lesson titled: **Holidays and Special Services/Thanksgiving** as well as Matthew 6:25-34, 1 Timothy 6:17, and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.
- Learn the memory verse: “Give thanks no matter what happens.”  
--1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIRV)
- Work on memorizing Article of Faith # \_\_\_\_.
- Take a piece of paper and number it from 1 to 100. For this week, every day try to think of 20 things you are thankful for. It will get harder as you get further along on your list, for sure. Are you up to the challenge? Bring your list to class.