

Who We Are: Connect

Review:

- **Who We Are Series:** to ensure alignment and unity.
- **Our Vision:** We exist to reach the world for Jesus one person at a time.
- **Our Mission:** We will create Biblical disciples in relational environments.
- **Our Process** of discipleship: Jesus' model of Share, Connect, Minister, Disciple.
- **20/20 Vision:** Past, present and future.

This week is Our Mission:

- **We will create Biblical disciples in relational environments.**
 - **Connect** – to God, to others, and to purpose.

Connecting Jesus' _____ with Jesus' Teachings

John 3:22 (NLT) Then Jesus and his disciples left Jerusalem and went into the Judean countryside. Jesus spent some time with them there, baptizing people.

⇒ Connected to Him, to each other, and to purpose.

Mark 9:30-31 (NLT) ³⁰Leaving that region, they traveled through Galilee. Jesus didn't want anyone to know he was there, ³¹for he wanted to spend more time with his disciples and teach them...

⇒ Connected to Him, to each other, and to purpose.

Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT) ¹⁸Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

⇒ Because still connected to Him: connect with others and His purpose.

The Early Church's _____

Acts 2:42-47 (NLT) ⁴²All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. ⁴³A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. ⁴⁴And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. ⁴⁵They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. ⁴⁶They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity — ⁴⁷all 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.

⇒ Connect to God, each other and purpose

The Human _____ for Connectedness

- Many scientific studies, including:
 - The article "Connectedness and Health: The Science of Social Connection" By Dr. Emma Seppala
 - The book *Hardwired to Connect: The New Scientific Case for Authoritative Communities* by Dr. Kathleen A. Kovner Kline

Genesis 2:18 (NLT) Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

⇒ Already connected to God, but to be made in His image (**Genesis 1:27**) is to be connected to others (**Genesis 1:26** – "Us") and to purpose (**Genesis 1:28**).

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NLT) ⁹Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. ¹⁰If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. ¹¹Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? ¹²A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

⇒ Support *group*—not just one other person.

Relational Environments

- Life Groups, Small Groups, Men's, Women's, Singles, Seniors, Recovery, Purity, Youth, Children, etc.
- Components: the Word, Prayer, Fellowship, modeling, encouragement, transparency, support, etc.
- Launching pad to real relationship\

Characterized by God's kind of _____ Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-7 (NLT) ¹If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. ³If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing. ⁴Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

⇒ It's about loving others with God's kind of love

Romans 12: 9-10 (NLT) ⁹Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

⇒ It's about genuine, authentic, and selfless love.

Romans 12: 13-16 (NLT) ¹³When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. ¹⁵Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

⇒ It's about giving and receiving God's love from others.

Next Steps

Trust God—His Method, His Teaching, and His Sufficiency.

- **Get connected**
- **Reconnect**
- **Stay committed**

Questions to meditate on & discuss:

1. What comes to mind when you think of a "disciple of Jesus"? How do you see yourself related to that?
2. Who makes up your support network/community? How are you experiencing connectedness with them? How do you offer connectedness to them?
3. What steps could you take this week to go deeper in transparency with another Christ follower?
4. Who is someone you can invite to your small group?