

# COMMUNITY

## Part 5

### Community: Its Purpose, Its Power, and Its Promise

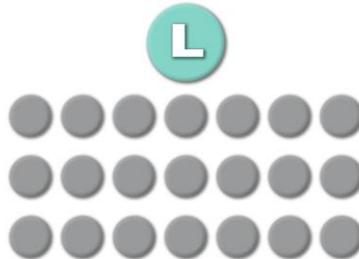
#### Becoming A Team Player-Part Two

Recently I was invited by the leadership of a local church to discuss discipleship. The church has 8000 people.

In the room were both staff members and volunteers who have very strong views about discipleship based on their own personal experience.



One group of men felt very strongly about one to one discipleship.



One group of men felt very strongly about one to group discipleship.

#### Discipleship Is A Team Sport



Without discounting the importance of these biblical methods of discipleship, I showed them team discipleship and why this biblical method is so important to the spiritual growth of every member of the church.

I showed them from the Word of God that it was God's intention for discipleship to be a team sport and that it was God's intention for every member of the team to play a role in the discipleship process of all the other members.

I showed them from the Word of God that team discipleship can only happen in small groups. I told them this is why Jesus chose 12 to be with Him. I told them this is why the early church met in small groups in homes. I told them that small groups can be relational so that everyone can play. I also told them about the incredible power of community in team discipleship.

I gave them a lot to think about.

Just forming small groups in a church will not create community or team discipleship.

To experience the power of community in small groups, the team must have the right wine skin so everyone can play.

To experience the power of community in small groups, the team must be comprised of team players.

Our leader, Jesus Christ, was and is the ultimate team player. His eternal community and team is the trinity. His team on earth was His 12 disciples and it is now His church.

[Matt. 16:18-19](#)

[18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."](#)

[NKJV](#)

To be a team player we must be transformed into the image of Jesus. To be transformed into the image of Jesus means we must develop the character of Jesus Christ.

[2 Cor. 3:18](#)

[18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.](#)

[NKJV](#)

This process begins with a genuine conversion when we are born again of the Spirit of God. It continues throughout our life on earth. The transformation will be completed when we receive our eternal body. (1 John 3:2-3)

1 John 3:2-3

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

NKJV

What are the character qualities of team players based on the character of Jesus Christ?

I. Team players follow the leader of the team (Matthew 26:39)

As a member of the trinity, Jesus was submissive to authority.

God gives authority to government. (Romans 13:1-5)

To be a team player we must develop the character of submission to authority.

II. Team players are committed to the mission of the team (John 3:16; John 10:17-18).

As a member of the trinity Jesus was loyal to the mission of the team.

To be a team player we must develop the character of loyalty.

III. Team players accept the role they are given on the team (Phil. 2:5-7)

As a member of the trinity Jesus accepted the role He was given. He was meek.

To be a team player we must develop the character of meekness.

IV. Team players fulfill their responsibility to the team (Gal. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:24)

Jesus came in the fullness of time. Jesus was faithful to everything He was assigned to do on the team. His Word was His bond. He will come again when the fullness of the Gentiles is completed. He is someone His team mates can count on.

Being responsible is hard work. It is painful. It requires preparation. It requires time. It requires money.

To be a team player we must be responsible.

V. Team players communicate compassionately (Matt. 9:36; Eph. 4:15)

Compassion is investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others. Jesus spoke the truth to others. But the truth that He spoke was always to promote healing in their souls and their relationships. This is called speaking the truth in love. He made people aware of their sinful condition so that they could see their need for change and their need for a savior.

To be a team player we must develop the character of compassion.

VI. Team players listen empathetically (Mark 10:46-49)

Jesus listened empathetically to others. He did not cross talk. He did not interrupt. He was slow to speak. He listened closely to people in order to understand their need.

To be a team player we must develop the character of empathetic attentiveness.

VII. Team players actively participate (Mark 4:23-25)

Jesus was not a recluse. He did not choose his own comfort over the needs of the team. He chose to participate when He did not feel like participating.

To be a team player we must develop the character of initiative.

VIII. Team players are transparent (John 11:35; Matt. 17:17; John 12:27; Matt. 26:38; John 19:28; Mark 15:34)

Jesus never sinned so he never had a sin to confess but He was transparent about His struggles and His feelings. He wept openly over the death of Lazarus and over the condition of the Jews. He expressed His disappointment over the unbelief in His disciples. He was honest about His grief in Gethsemane. He acknowledged that he was thirsty on the cross. He acknowledged that he felt forsaken by the Father on the cross.

To be a team player we must develop the character of humility

IX. Team players cooperate and pitch in to help (Luke 2:51-52; Mark 6:3; John 2:1-10; John 13:5; John 3:16)

Before Jesus began His public ministry, even though He was the messiah, the King of Israel, Jesus served His parents. He worked as a carpenter to help support His family. During His public ministry He worked tirelessly to serve the practical needs of others. He turned water into wine at a wedding. He had meals prepared for His disciples. He washed His disciple's feet. He died for the sins of the world.

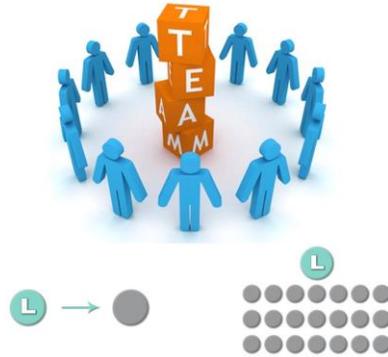
To be a team player we must develop the character of a servant

X. Team players are problem solvers (Matt. 6:14; John 8:11; Matt. 23:16; Mark 10:21; Matt. 20:25-28; Matt. 6:19-21)

Jesus told those who were bitter to forgive. He told those who were immoral they could be forgiven. He rebuked the proud. He told the rich to help the poor. He told the powerful to be servants. He told the famous to work for eternal treasure. He was wise.

To be a team player we must develop the character of wisdom.

Followers of Jesus should be best team mates on any team because they have the character of Jesus Christ. They should be the best citizens, the best employees, the best team mates, the best soldiers, the best children, and the best church members.



The best place in the world to develop the character of Jesus should be in the church. The best place in the church to develop the character of Jesus is in a small group. It is why Jesus chose 12 to be with Him. It is why the early church met in homes.

Developing good character requires....

- Practice
- Trial
- Error
- Correction
- Accountability
- Encouragement
- Support

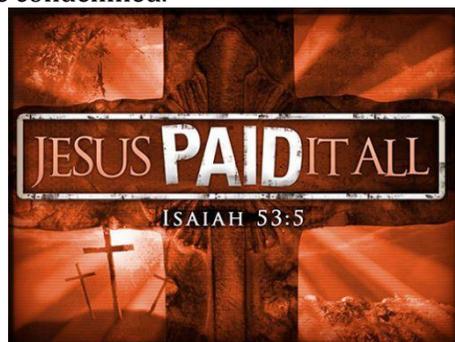
In a small group you grow with others into the image of Jesus as you practice team discipleship.

If you join one of our small group teams, you will discover that each small group has an intentional leader, a biblical curriculum, and a relational environment that are designed to help you practice team discipleship and develop these character qualities.

Your first step to becoming a team player in the church of Jesus Christ is to receive Jesus as your personal savior and Lord.

You need a savior because you are a sinner. One of the character qualities of sinners is that they are selfish. Selfish people do not make good team players in families, in sports, in business, as citizens, or in church.

Because you are sinner, you are condemned.



You escape condemnation by receiving Jesus as the sacrifice for your sin. Jesus paid it all!

To receive Jesus, you must repent of your sin and follow Jesus. The outward sign that you are following Jesus is baptism. (Acts 2:38).