

Project be
project be
believe | belong | become

BELONG
WEEK SIX

IN COMMUNITY

Have you ever heard it said that we are wired for relationship? Or that no man is an island? It is true: to be connected with God and to be in relationship with each other is where our souls find most satisfaction and pleasure. This is where life truly becomes rich and enjoyable - by investing in others and in return receiving what our hearts most desire: love, connection and belonging. In this step of our project BE we are going to explore how God has intrinsically and intentionally made us with an embedded need for family, community and a unit greater than ourselves, which is His beautiful, beloved, glorious Church.

But God has carefully designed each member and placed it in the body to function as He desires. A diversity is required, for if the body consisted of one single part, there wouldn't be a body at all! So now we see that there are many differing parts and functions, but one body. (...) He has done this intentionally so that every member would look after the others with mutual concern, and so that there will be no division in the body. In that way, whatever happens to one member happens to all. If one suffers, everyone suffers.

If one is honoured, everyone rejoices.

1 Corinthians 12:18-20

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Proverbs 27:17

BELONGING TOGETHER LOOKS LIKE...

Taking care of each other

We see in this passage of scripture how Paul uses the picture of a body with many parts to describe how we as believers are tied to one another. In the Church of Jesus Christ, just as in a body, every single part has a function and a value. In God's eyes we have equal importance and value, because as the scripture says, we would never want to lose a hand or an eye. Not even the little toe would go unnoticed if it wasn't there, as that would affect the overall balance of the whole body.

We should be generous towards one another and show honour and appreciation for each other. We should acknowledge that our jobs and gifts, skills and tasks might look different. However, we should not compare because our value stays uniquely the same. It doesn't matter WHAT we do but WHOSE we are!

You are the body of the Anointed One, and each of you is a unique and vital part of it.
1 Corinthians 12:27

Let's discuss and think of ways we can practically take care of each other:

Challenging one another

When this proverb talks about sharpening each other, it is with the aim of seeing each other with God's eyes. We need to strive to see the potential, the gifts, the highest calling and the incredible plans God has placed in each and every person around us. With this mindset, we encourage and challenge each other to live in faith and according to God's word and wisdom.

"By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."
John 13:35

These friendships mean that in our church family, we take care of each other, we are ready to help and quick to forgive in grace. We must also dare to speak the truth to one another, not shying away from confronting each other - always in love - to bring resolve and true peace. In this way we will grow as individuals and as our love in God matures, we will become a testimony to others as well.

Let's discuss and think of ways we can practically take care of each other:

Celebrating our family

A family is a group of people with combined values and common goals. It's a team of 24/7 cheerleaders and encouragers, people that have each other's back, that support and help one another and push each other forward. This family will always find the good, celebrate the good and speak the good. This is not just found in romantic love, marriage, biological family and blood relatives - this is the heart of God for all His children. This is why the church is such a powerful idea from God! Becoming disciplined within the church is so beneficial for us as we grow to become more like Christ. We can do it together, growing and learning from one another in accountability.

With all these beautiful gifts available to us, why would we then not choose community? Why do some people never fully plant themselves in a local church? Why is it sometimes easier to live in isolation and autonomy than in relationship? Because all these gifts are valuable and costly and the cost looks like commitment, love with no strings and agendas attached, a desire for unity above self. It is no cheap thing to forgive 7x77 times like the Bible says, to honour and prefer others above ourselves. This is why love hurts sometimes, but if you see it as an investment, then the benefits and gifts far outweigh the cost. We can do all these things through Christ's example, because He paid the ultimate price of love to be with us. We love, because He first loved us.

Let's discuss and think of ways we can practically celebrate our family:

Which parts do you find easy/ hard?

Can you remember when people have done these things for you and the effect it had on you?

Let's PARK together! Let's affirm our God give responsibility to build His church through practical care, spiritual encouragement and an all-in investment of love.

Park **P.A.R.K**

PRAY

Make prayer a central part of your gathering

AFFIRM

Emphasise what God's word says and how we can build our lives on it

REMEMBER

Take a moment to remind ourselves of God's goodness and faithfulness

KNOW

Commit to what we have learned and how we can take these truths into our week
