

# The Church and Community

FUMCOR Youth Confirmation Lesson

## Bible Passage: Ephesians 2:19

### Obstacle Course

**Round 1** — The participants must navigate the course blindfolded on their own.

**Round 2** — The participants may choose a friend to be a “guide” and shout directions from the finish line, but they cannot make contact.

**Round 3** — The “guide” can lead the blindfolded participant any way they choose. This includes holding their hand, pushing them from behind, or even carrying them through the course on their back.

### After the activity, ask the following questions:

1. For those of you who were blindfolded, which round was the hardest and which round was the easiest?
2. What made Round 1 so difficult?
3. What was the major difference between Round 2 and Round 3?
4. For the whole group, what worked best to navigate the course in Round 3? Was there anything that would've worked better than what our guides did? (Holding hands, walking beside them, walking behind them, picking them up and carrying them)
5. What are some other real-life activities that can be easier with help? (homework, chores, studying the Bible, serving others)
6. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being not important and 10 being VERY important), how important is it for God's followers to serve and grow together?

As Christians, we are wired to be a part of a family. Not just a family with parents and siblings, but a bigger family—the family of God.

We are siblings who share the same Creator, God. We all need one another.

In fact, the phrase “one another” is used at least 58 times in the New Testament.

Love one another, serve one another, pray for one another, encourage one another, teach one another, submit to one another, and bear one another's burdens—all of these are mentioned in the New Testament as it talks about the Family of God.

### Ephesians 2:19 says:

“You are a member of God's very own family and you belong in God's household with every other Christian.”

God has called us to assist one another and encourage one another as siblings of faith. We need to belong to a community like this.

Being in community means we're doing life together with God in the picture.

We're connecting with friends and making new friends...all who are following Jesus.

We're connecting with our leaders at church, who help us grow closer to our relationship with God.

However, it's more than just hanging out and having fun. We're placing God the center of our relationships.

We're praying for our friends (and being prayed for).

We're encouraging and uplifting our friends (and being encouraged and uplifted).

We're accepting each other as we are (and being accepted as we are).

We're celebrating the good stuff happening in each others lives.

**There are many reasons why being in community is so important, but we're just going to highlight three of them.**

**1. We need to be in a church community because...we need to grow spiritually.**

God has called each of us to grow in wisdom and knowledge of God. This is impossible to do alone. We need to be with other believers who can encourage us and hold us accountable.

**Read Hebrews 10:24- And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds.**

This verse instructs us to think of ways that we can encourage each other in our spiritual growth. We should be thinking of what we can do or say that will encourage others to live according to Jesus' message of love.

**2. I need to be in community because...more can be done together than can ever be done alone.**

There is always strength in numbers. This is true for Christians. There is power that comes in community.

**Read Matthew 18:19-20- "Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."**

The power of God is unleashed when we meet together in community. This verse shows us that Christ is there with us, and is listening to us pray together. There is power in this promise.

**Read John 13:35- By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

The world sees the love that we share as a group in community.

When we encourage one another and pray with one another, the whole world sees it and knows that we are part of God’s family.

Think about this, being in community tells the entire world that the grace and love of Jesus Christ has changed your life and can do the same for them.

**3. I need to be in community because...God designed me that way.**

Being in community is not just a good idea; it’s the way God designed us.

Scripture tells us that God gives us spiritual gifts when we become a Christian, and these gifts are to be used to serve other believers.

**Read 1 Peter 4:10- Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.**

**Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-14- For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.**

God has given every believer a set of gifts, and wants us to work together, by using our gifts, so that we can accomplish our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We need to be in community so that we can fulfill our role—our part—in the body of Christ

**Galatians 6:10 says:**

“Let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” We should be thinking of how our words and our actions build up other believers. God had commanded us to be a part of a small group community. We need to obey His command because we need to grow spiritually and there is so much power that comes through our community.

## Discussion Questions:

What are some ways your church, your friends, or your family have supported you in your life and faith?

Your family is a great resource for you as well. What do you think the difference is between your home family and your church community? How are they similar and how are they different?

Most of us here “go to church,” but what does it mean to “be the church?” How are those two similar and different?

Think hard about this answer, but do you think you can live out Christian faith by yourself? All alone?

Think about the earliest Christians. They met in homes, shared real meals together, hung out (at weird times like before the sun came up or in graveyards...good reasons but weird anyways), and lived into “being the church,” even though they likely didn’t even have “churches,” as we think of.