



## **ICEBREAKER**

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Growing up, did you have a teacher or a mentor that impacted your life? Tell us about them.

## **TESTIMONY**

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Give someone or a couple 5-10 minutes to share their testimony with the group.

## **SCRIPTURE**

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### **JOHN 13:34-35**

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

### **1 THESSALONIANS 2:8**

*"Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well."*

## **DEVOTIONAL**

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Jesus didn't simply gather people into the same room once a week. **He shared his life with them.** The disciples traveled together, ate together, served together, asked questions, disagreed, failed, learned, prayed, and grew together. Jesus' command was not simply to *meet together*, but to love one another as he had loved them.

That is why healthy community requires more than attendance. We can sit in the same living room every week and still barely know one another. Discipleship begins when we move beyond simply being **around one another** and begin intentionally **sharing life with one another.**

That means noticing when someone is struggling. Asking meaningful questions. Following up on a prayer request. Sharing what we are learning. Encouraging someone. Speaking truth when necessary. Eating together. Having fun together. Showing up when someone needs help. The goal isn't simply: *"I have a community group."* It's: *"I have people who are helping me follow Jesus—and I'm helping them follow Jesus too."*

## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

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1. What do you think is the difference between attending a community group and actually sharing life together? Share some examples or experiences you have had in the past.
2. What helps you feel safe enough to be honest and vulnerable with other people? What tends to make that difficult?
3. What could we do as a group to build relationships outside of our regular meeting time?

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: CONNECTION PAIRS

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Pair people up—or groups of three if necessary. Give everyone 10–15 minutes to share:

- Something you are grateful for right now.
- Something that is challenging you right now.
- One way you would like to grow in your faith during this season of community groups.
- One small thing someone can do that makes you feel genuinely cared for.
- One way the other person can pray for you.

Encourage everyone to connect with that person outside of your normal meeting. Don't just send logistics. Ask how they are doing, encourage them, pray for them, grab coffee, share a meal, or spend time together. Community happens between the meetings too.