

Part 5: Every Ship Has a Crew

BIG IDEA

We thrive as disciples of Christ when we pursue God's greater purpose in community with one another.

MAIN SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:10 (NIV) - *Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.*

OPTIONAL VIDEO RESOURCE

- In *Not Alone: A Study on Friendship*, Jennie Allen, Lauren Chandler, and Amena Brown discuss the importance of Christian friends in our lives.
- [View on RightNow Media*](#) - [SESSION 1 "What Are Friends For?"](#) (NOTE: For the focus of this week's study, we recommend jumping into this video at **5:46 mins** and watching to the end.)

ICEBREAKER

1. **What clique (if any) were you part of in high school? What did you have to do to belong?**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

A Crew with a Common Headway

2. Think of the different groups of people you are involved with in your life. **What are the commonalities that connect you? What are some of the struggles in keeping the group moving in the same direction?**

* If you do not yet have a login for RightNow Media, please use this link to join under our Church of the Rock subscription: [Rightnow Media Login Request](#).

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The disciples experienced challenges in moving forward together. For instance, there were political tensions. Before they became disciples, Simon was a zealot, a political activist for the Jewish people whose mission was to overthrow the hated Roman oppressors who controlled them. Matthew was a tax collector for those same hated Roman oppressors. There were also family tensions. The mother of James and John asked for special standing with Jesus ([Matthew 20:20–28](#)) above that of the other disciples and the disciples were indignant about it. Even so, Jesus spent three years honing them into a group of people who could accomplish the spreading out of the Kingdom of God.

3. How did Jesus get them “on board” with His purpose?

4. Similar group dynamics amongst us as disciples of Jesus still happen today (e.g. diversity in politics, socio-economic status, race, social issues, etc.). **As we pursue God's greater purpose, how do we keep the focus on what is important?**

5. What can we learn from how Jesus addressed the debates of the day to keep the focus on loving God and loving others?

- [Mark 12:13–17](#)
- [Matthew 5:21–22](#)
- [John 4:7–9, 20–24](#)

On a ship we use a spyglass (telescope) to focus on the direction the ship (and the crew) is heading. Sometimes, instead of using a spyglass, we use a magnifying glass to look at what matters most to us personally, which does not help us see where we are going.

[Hebrews 12:1–2](#) (NIV) - *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

6. **What areas do you personally find it easy to get so passionate about (magnifying glass) that it hinders your ability to fix your eyes on Jesus as part of His crew?**

How to Get Along

[Philippians 4:1-3](#) (NIV) - *Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!*

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Paul highlights here some things that Euodia [Yō-dee-a] and Syntyche [Sin-te-kay] had in common: they were working companions, they had same mind in the Lord, and their names are in the book of life.

[Ephesians 4:3-6](#) (NIV) *³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

7. **In Ephesians 4:3-6 above, what are some other vital components of our faith that we have in common with other believers that supersede our personal disagreements?**

8. **What are some practical ways that you have learned to live in Christian community, even when you disagree over things that are very important to you?**

9. "Messy" and "awkward" are inevitable in community, because we are all imperfect people. Whether you have been a Christian for 5 minutes or for 50 years, we are all travelling together

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on the “trip of a lifetime.” **What things have helped you enjoy the journey together so far in spite of the messiness?**

To get you started, see the Resource Section below re: “The ‘One-Another’ Passages”

Benefits of Doing Life Together

Right from the beginning, God was building a community. In the Old Testament it was exemplified in the nation of Israel. In the New Testament, Jesus was building His community, the church, not just individuals. We cannot live a life of godliness on our own—we need each other.

Romans 12:15–16 (NIV) - *Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.*

10. What are ways that we cheer each other on in our achievements, pursuits, challenges, character growth, etc.? How have you received encouragement?

11. It might be more challenging to mourn with those who mourn. What are practical ways that we can enter into another person’s grief?

There are many different forms of Christian community. We have our peers, we have our small group, we celebrate in a large group, and we can also have both informal and formal mentoring relationships.

12. Evaluate your community connections - are you in relationship with Christian people of different cultures, different ages, different backgrounds, etc.? What additional connections do you want to pursue?

ACTIVATION

Have each person in the group choose one of the “one anothers” (from the list in the Resource section below) that they want to grow in, and then have the group pray for each member in this regard.

THIS WEEK

What is a practical first step in pursuing additional connections?

RESOURCE

The “One Another” Passages of the New Testament[†]

The phrase “one another” is derived from the Greek word *allelon* which means “one another, each other; mutually, reciprocally.” It occurs 100 times in the New Testament. Approximately 59 of those occurrences are specific commands teaching us how (and how not) to relate to one another.

Obedience to those commands is imperative. It forms the basis for all true Christian community, and has a direct impact on our witness to the world ([John 13:35](#)). In addition to *allelon*, the Bible uses other words and phrases to instruct us how to relate to others. With that in mind, the following list is not exhaustive, and primarily focuses on the use of *allelon*.

[†] Adapted from “The ‘One Another’ Passages” - Morningside Ministries (San Antonio, TX), <https://www.mmlearn.org/hubfs/docs/OneAnotherPassages.pdf>, accessed Oct 12, 2021.

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HOW TO TREAT ONE ANOTHER (commands in the positive)

- **Love** one another ([John 13:34](#) - *This command occurs at least 16 times*)
- **Be devoted to** one another ([Romans 12:10](#))
- **Honor** one another **above yourselves** ([Romans 12:10](#))
- **Live in harmony with** one another ([Romans 12:16](#))
- **Build up** one another ([Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11](#))
- **Be likeminded towards** one another ([Romans 15:5](#))
- **Accept** one another ([Romans 15:7](#))
- **Admonish** one another ([Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16](#))
- **Greet** one another ([Romans 16:16](#))
- **Care for** one another ([1 Corinthians 12:25](#))
- **Serve** one another ([Galatians 5:13](#))
- **Bear** one another's **burdens** ([Galatians 6:2](#))
- **Forgive** one another ([Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13](#))
- **Be patient with** one another ([Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13](#))
- **Speak the truth** in love ([Ephesians 4:15, 25](#))
- **Be kind and compassionate** to one another ([Ephesians 4:32](#))
- **Speak** to one another **with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs** ([Ephesians 5:19](#))
- **Submit** to one another ([Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 5:5](#))
- **Consider** others **better than yourselves** ([Philippians 2:3](#))
- **Look to the interests of** one another ([Philippians 2:4](#))
- **Bear with** one another ([Colossians 3:13](#))
- **Teach** one another ([Colossians 3:16](#))
- **Comfort** one another ([1 Thessalonians 4:18](#))
- **Encourage** one another ([1 Thessalonians 5:11](#))
- **Exhort** one another ([Hebrews 3:13](#))
- **Stir up [provoke, stimulate]** one another **to love and good works** ([Hebrews 10:24](#))
- **Show hospitality** to one another ([1 Peter 4:9](#))
- **Employ the gifts that God has given us for the benefit of** one another ([1 Peter 4:10](#))
- **Clothe yourselves with humility towards** one another ([1 Peter 5:5](#))
- **Pray for** one another ([James 5:16](#))
- **Confess your faults** to one another ([James 5:16](#))

HOW TO NOT TREAT ONE ANOTHER (commands in the negative)

- **Do not lie** to one another ([Colossians 3:9](#)).
- **Stop passing judgment** on one another ([Romans 14:13](#)).
- If you **keep on biting and devouring** each other...**you'll be destroyed by** each other ([Galatians 5:15](#)).
- Let us **not become conceited, provoking and envying** each other ([Galatians 5:26](#)).
- **Do not slander** one another ([James 4:11](#)).
- **Don't grumble against** each other ([James 5:9](#))

We do all this because we are in a real sense "**members of one another**" ([Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25](#)).