



Grace Church Elementary

Camp Grace

LESSON 73

3rd and 4th Grade

Principle: True fellowship of believers.

Bible Character(s): Believers

Scripture Reference: Acts 2:42-47



Personal Preparation: Before this weekend, read through Acts 2:42-47. Paul

illustrates a model of community in the early church. Apply this text to your class and think of ways to encourage your campers to engage and have fellowship with one another. Stress that living this way is not about changing our actions, but about changing our heart so that these things flow out of a new heart, one that has been crucified with Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit. As we teach these campers biblical truths, we also want to teach them how to be in community with each other. *See the "Ideas for Building Community in Your Cabin" at the end of this lesson for a list of ways you can build community and fellowship within your cabin.* Spend some time praying for your campers to understand God's purpose for community, and for your campers to grow together in faith to learn what it looks like to live in community.

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

Church Is Word Search



BIG GROUP TIME - 35-40 minutes

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All Leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts - fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we will learn more about fellowship and the early church. We will see how we can grow closer and share life together as God intended. Our focus will be on unity and sharing, and how these things flow out of a heart that has been changed by Christ.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

What did you learn in Big Group? Why was the Ape getting upset? (He didn't want to share his food.) **What did he learn about how we do things here at Camp Grace?** (We share with one another so no one goes without; the first church lived in community with one another, and they helped each other by sharing what they had.) **What is "community"?** (Living alongside Christians, helping one another and sharing all we have with each other.)

In our last lesson a few weeks ago, we celebrated Jesus' ascension into Heaven, after His death and resurrection. Who did Jesus promise to leave with His disciples, and all believers? (He promised to send the Holy Spirit to live inside believers.) If you have faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior, then you have the Holy Spirit living in you. What does the Holy Spirit do for believers? (The Holy Spirit gives us power, wisdom, direction, comfort, and helps us live a life that brings glory to God.) God continues to change us daily through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Today we will continue studying in the book of Acts. We are going to see the believers come together to live their lives for God. Each believer received gifts from the Holy Spirit so that they could worship God and tell others about Jesus' death and resurrection. God called them to come together as a community, or church, to serve and worship Him.

Let's begin in Acts 2 [NLT] to see how the early church came together to serve Christ.

Acts 2:42

⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

If you had to describe to someone what the church is, what would you say? (Allow responses.)

Let's take a closer look.

Church as a Family



The purpose of this activity is to show what characterized the early church and what our church should look like.

Supplies:

Pictures of family (eating, sharing, praying, reading) (1 set per bin)

Pictures of church buildings (1 set per bin)
Worksheet – “Church as Family” section (1 per camper)

Ask the campers which pictures represent the church – the actual building or the pictures of people? After you talk through this, have the campers list or draw activities that fit into the four main categories of fellowship that we experience and talk about in Camp Grace: praying, sharing, reading, eating. (Please clip each set back together and leave in the bin for the next cabin session and for lesson storage.)

Tie It Together

 The church building is not the church. Having a building to meet in is nice, but we, as believers, are the church. God lives within us through the Holy Spirit, and He calls us to pray, learn, fellowship and live our lives together so that together we can glorify God. We can do this through the things we have listed or drawn on our sheet.

Let's continue reading the Bible in Acts 2.

Acts 2:43

⁴³ *A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.*

What is a sense of awe? (Allow responses.) Awe is an overwhelming feeling of amazement, and fear produced by something that is powerful. Do you experience awe when you hear about God or what He has done for you or others? (Allow responses.) The believers in the early church saw God's power at work in their lives. They felt a sense of awe when they lived together in community and fellowship. This is the way God created us to live. It is through community that we can come to know God better and love one another as God loves us. Let's read more in the Bible.

Acts 2:44-46

⁴⁴ *And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. ⁴⁵ They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. ⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.*

Unity Chain

 The purpose of this activity is to create a chain reminding the campers of the areas that bind the church together.

Supplies:

Chain strips (1 set per session)
Tape/stapler

Using the “Share Life,” “Pray,” “Share Meals,” and “Study God’s Word” strips and a stapler or tape, make

a chain to decorate your cabin and serve as a reminder to be unified in Christ.

Tie It Together

 Verse 46 says that as the believers shared their lives and worshiped God together, their hearts were filled with great joy. This is what God wants for us as well; He created us to be in community, just as He is in community. God is three persons in One: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each person of God lives in community and fellowship with the other. God created the church to live in community too, in order to bring glory to Him. We are to be unified together in serving God. It is through the context of community that we can truly experience life change. God works in the midst of community to change our hearts to be more like His. Can you think of an example of how you live in community, as God created it to be? (Allow responses.) We are in community in our cabin; we can learn and study God's word, and love each other by getting to know one another and encouraging one another.

Unity Is For Me

 The purpose of this activity is for campers to see how they are to add to unity among the body.

Supplies:

Worksheet – “Ephesians 4:1-4” side (1 per camper)

Have each camper write their name in the blank spaces in the verse, and then read through the verse for your campers.

Example: Therefore I, a prisoner of the Lord, implore David to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which David has been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also David was called in one hope of David's calling.

Tie It Together

 This verse talks about how the body of Christ was created to work. We need to think of others first, showing humility, gentleness, and patience towards those around us. We should love one another and share our lives with each other. When we believe that Jesus died and rose again, we are given the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength and power to live this way. Living in community is not easy, because it is in community that your sin is more exposed to yourself and others. But God created us to live in community so that we can recognize our sin, and repent of it. We can help others see their sin, so they can repent of it. Loving one another can be difficult, but when we love others, we love God. We learn more about Him, and experiencing life in the way God created us to live. When we live in community as God calls us to, we are united together through the Spirit. We experience heart change in the context of community, and this is how we become more like Jesus.

Pray Together



The purpose of this activity is to spend time praying together to create community.

Supplies:

White board

Ask each camper to give a prayer request. Write down the requests on the board. If you have campers willing to pray out loud, go around the table and give them an opportunity to pray for the camper on their right. If you have reluctant campers, either ask for a couple of campers to pray or the Camp Counselor can pray for each of the campers. We want to encourage the campers to pray for one another, however we do not want to force them into it. The Camp Counselor can end small group time in prayer if the campers spent time praying for one another.

Prayer Time

Spend a few minutes in prayer to close small group time. Thank God for creating us to be in community with one another. Ask God to help us learn how to live together in true fellowship and community.

Ideas for Building Community in Your Cabin

1. **Pray with your cabin.** Pray for safety, for their families, and that they would show each other kindness and care each week.
2. Try to do an activity together outside Camp Grace.
3. Occasionally send postcards to your campers; share with them how you pray for them specifically.
4. **Draw similarities between the kids in thoughtful ways.** For example: “man, you guys both enjoy drawing pictures” or “both of you girls are terrific at bringing friends to church.” Help them see ways in which they reflect God’s character and look for these types of attributes rather than more superficial observations such as, “you’re both wearing pretty dresses.” This will help them befriend one another and see ways that they and others are made in the image of God.
5. **Split into smaller groups and help the campers pray for each other.** This can be awkward, but practice helps. Keep it simple and lead them. For example, “Austin, let’s pray for Madison as she has a new baby brother” or “Anna, we are going to pray that Jack has a great attitude on the soccer field.”
6. **Do a simple icebreaker at the beginning of class each week.** For example: give the kids numbers – odd numbers share two silly talents they have, even numbers share about their pets. Or tap on their heads calling

them “peanut butter” and “jelly” (or anything silly) and say, “Peanut butters share their favorite vacations, jellies share their favorite flavor ice cream.” Doing this repeatedly in various ways helps find common interests for the campers.

7. **Connect with parents/families.** Some classroom leaders have created Facebook groups to stay connected with parents outside of class; this helps parents carry over what’s being taught in class as they talk about these topics at home during the week. You may want to do weekly or monthly email updates (ask your coach for a list of email addresses); monthly or quarterly events; etc.

8. **Come up with your own fun idea** and if it works well, please email your campus GCK staff or let your coach know. We’d love to hear what works well for your group, so we can share with other cabins and campuses!

Leaders – The Grace Church Kids staff are here to help you with these connections and ideas. Please do not hesitate to ask us, or your coach, for help brainstorming, planning, and executing. We can provide you with postcards, postcard stamps, and mailing addresses (#3); give you a list of parents’ email addresses (#7); or help with invitations, supplies, and other needs (#2, #7). We want to partner with you in creating community within your cabin. Let us know how we can help.



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