

Identity, **Community**, Purpose

All people want to:

- Know who we are.
- have a place to belong.
- give our lives to something important.

Real community requires love, trust, patience and self-discipline.

In order to be the community we want to be, we have to deal with the community that we are.

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:44-47

We tend to focus on what people should do rather than who people should be.

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 2 With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God." 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. Acts 5:1-5

If we focus on behaviors we may change them. But if we focus on Jesus, He'll change hearts, and behaviors change when hearts change.

Unresolved or ignored sin in individual lives is at the heart of why most churches don't feel connected to God and to one another.

Building authentic, Godly community lies not in our ability to program or control it. It lies in Jesus' ability to create it while he re-creates us.