

## You Are Only as Strong as Your Foundation

Your ability to stand strong is based completely on the strength of what you are standing upon. My daughters make me nervous when they climb on top of something that is not sturdy, something that will give out and cause them to fall. **Standing is really not about our ability but the strength of what we are standing upon.**

For this reason, the apostle Paul reminded the Corinthian believers that they not only received and believed the gospel, but they continually stood on the firm foundation of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1).

In the same way, community is only as strong as what it is built upon. The community (common unity) among believers in a church is only strong if it stands upon that which is everlasting and eternal. If community is built only on life stages, interests, or zip codes, the community is weak. And thus it disappears as the foundation shifts.

In John 17, Jesus prayed for us—those who would believe in Him through the message of the disciples. He prayed that our community would be strong and that we would be one as He and the Father are one. We see two challenges in John 17 that should inform how churches build community among those God entrusts to the church.

First, **community must be built upon the pure and faultless Word of God.** Jesus prayed for His disciples, “Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth” (v. 17). If folks in small groups, Sunday School classes, or whatever the church calls smaller gatherings, if they are not forming relationships around the Word, then the community is inevitably and infinitely shallow. It will not remain. God has anointed His Word as the living and active sword to wreak holy havoc in our lives. His Word sharpens and purifies us.

Second, **community must result in mission.** The end result of small groups gathering must not be merely small groups gathering. True community that stands on Jesus and His accomplished work for us results in mission. Jesus prayed, “May they all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You. May they also be one in Us, so the world may believe You sent Me” (v. 21). Jesus’ prayer for our community has always been that it would result in others knowing that He is the sent One—the One who came for us.

**Church leaders, don’t just build community. Build community that lasts.**

Many church leaders are deciding that they don’t just want groups of people meeting, but they want groups of people (kids, students, and adults) building community on the gospel of Jesus. They want people studying the gospel not in isolation but in community. Because of this longing from church leaders, we have recently launched The Gospel Project. It is an ongoing study (three years) that is designed to bring groups to Jesus through all of Scripture. It can also be utilized by groups that meet for shorter seasons. We have been overwhelmed with the response thus far to The Gospel Project. [If you would like to take a look at the study, you can pilot the curriculum here.](#)

Read more from Eric [here](#).