

Short Sheet # 17

Travelling Companions

(Fourth of five follow-up Bible Studies for after camp)

To the Leader: The following discussion is designed to educate kids concerning the value of belonging to a body of believers as well as to give them some practical guidelines in finding a body to belong to. Following the discussion outline you will find a survey sheet that you might find useful in determining where kids are in relation to the church.

Ice Breaker (Choose one or more.)

- Human knot (requires at least six people): Have 75 percent of the group sit down in the centre of the room and lock arms with one another, forming a human knot. The remaining members of the group have one minute (or until you call time) to pull as many people out of the knot as possible.
- Did you ever belong to a "secret" club when you were younger? Or maybe a club that wasn't a secret? Describe the club and explain the rules for belonging. What were the benefits of belonging? Why do people join clubs? Complete the following statement(s). "Church is a club for ____ . To belong you must ____ . One of the benefits of belonging is ____ (Note: It would be helpful if you had these statements printed on slips of paper ahead of time and handed them out for kids to write on.)
- Word association game: Prepare beforehand 8.1/2 x 11 sheets of paper with the following words on them (one word per sheet): car, chocolate, school, party, chores, concert, church. At the meeting, take up to six kids out of the room, bringing them in one at a time to play the word association game. Tell them it is a contest to see how quickly they can run through the cards. Time them and flash the cards at them one at a time. They may not proceed to the next card until they've associated a word to the current card. Have someone in the room write down each person's responses to the "church" flash card. At the end, have the recorder read all of the words kids said when shown the "church" card. Follow the game with the following questions:
 - When you picture "church" in your mind, what images do you see?
 - Imagine that you just received a "church construction" kit in the mall. With this amazing kit you can create any kind of church you want, with any kind of people and any kind of programs or buildings. What would your church be like? What kind of people would attend? What would the main service be like? Describe the building or place where you would meet.

Bridge Statement

We all have our own ideas about what church is or what we wish it were. Today we want to set aside our preconceived ideas as best we can and let God teach us from scratch what His idea of church is.

Examination of Scripture

- Examination of Scripture: Read Acts 2:42-47 and discuss the following questions.
- In verse 42, "they" refers to people who believed in Jesus Christ. What four things did the believers keep busy with according to this verse? Are there any words in this verse that are unfamiliar to you? (Leader: Explain in simple language.)
- People join a club because they have something in common with one another. It may be a sport; it may be a hobby; it may be a common concern. Let's make a list of things that people who believe in Christ have in common with one another.
- Read verse 43 again. Can you think of a time when you felt "in awe" of something or someone? What were the circumstances that made you feel that way?

- The believers were in awe. They couldn't get over all that was happening in their midst. They probably said 10 times a day, "Can you believe what's happening?" Some of the most amazing stuff that was happening is revealed in verses 44 and 45. What was happening among them? What is your gut reaction to these verses? Do you feel (a) encouraged (b) uncomfortable (c) confused (d) other. Can you explain why you feel that way?
- In this passage, the physical needs of the believers were being met by other believers. No doubt their spiritual, emotional and psychological needs were being met as well. What are some of our needs as human beings? As believers?
- How often were these people getting together? How often do you get together with other believers? Do you feel that is enough? If not, how often would you like to get together? Whom do you get together with besides this group? If the answer is "no one," do you think this group is enough to meet all of your needs as a believer?
- According to verse 47, what was the effect of the community of believers on "non-believers"? Today, most churches do not grow in number daily. Why do you think this is so? If our group here is not attracting new people, do you think we should be concerned? Why or why not?

A Verse to Meditate on and Memorise

Acts 2:44, "All the believers were together and had everything in common."

Application

Have kids fill out the survey at the end of this discussion. Ask them to answer as honestly and completely as possible.

Action Step (Choose one)

- If you attend church regularly, talk to your pastor or youth director this week and ask them if there is a time you can meet with them just to catch them up on what has been going on with you, spiritually speaking.
- If you do not attend church, tell your Young Life leader (or tell them right now!) that you want to go to church with them this week. Make specific arrangements to meet or to be picked up. (Leader: Be sensitive to the person who has never been to church. Call them during the week and talk with them about what they can expect and answer any questions they have. Take time after the service to "debrief" them - to process with them what happened and how they felt about it.)

See the next page for an easy- to-photocopy survey about church.

Travelling Companions for the Journey: the Church.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions as honestly and completely as possible. They will not be held against you in a court of law or even in a discussion at Young Life. They will be kept confidential between you and your leader.

1. Before today I would have defined church as:

After our discussion today, I would define church as:

2. My involvement in church in the past could best be described as:

- a. very involved and loved it;
- b. very involved, but from habit - it didn't mean much;
- c. forced to go;
- d. hardly ever went;
- e. never went;
- f. other _____

3. If you already attend church, answer question (a). If you do not attend church, answer question (b).

a. Where do you attend church?

What are some of the strengths of your church?

In what ways do you personally contribute to your church?

In what ways would you like to improve your involvement?

b. Does anyone in your family attend church? If so, who and where do they attend?

Would you feel comfortable going to church with this person? If not, why not?

Would you be willing to visit church with your Young Life leader?

Would your parents allow you to visit church with your Young Life leader?

Please feel free to write any questions you have about church on the back of this sheet. Your leader will find you this week and talk with you about your questions.