

THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO COMMUNITY

WHAT WOULD A COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE IF JESUS WERE IN CHARGE?

"What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³ And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. ¹⁴ In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish. ¹⁵ If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18:12-20

THE BIG QUESTION

HOW SHOULD THE COMMUNITY RESPOND WHEN SOMEONE GOES ASTRAY?

THE ANSWER

Just as the Father pursues, we too should pursue our brothers and sisters and restore them to the community.

BECOMING A COMMUNITY OF MIRRORS

Remember... the goal is restoration.

1. Go alone
2. Bring others
3. Call a family meeting

LIVING AS A COVENANTAL COMMUNITY

NEXT STEPS

IMAGINE your personal vision of justice. Do you see retribution or restoration? How can you become someone who favors restoration/healing over punishment? If someone in your life has **wandered off**, what steps can you take to restore him/her?

RE-READ the passage and **CONSIDER** to whom the text refers.

Instead of reading this as a story of someone else going astray,

READ it from the wandering sheep's perspective. Then **ASK** yourself:

- Is my heart soft enough to receive correction from others?
- What prevents me from hearing truth and being restored?

Suggested Resources

The New Friars by Scott Bessenecker

Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Cost of Community: Jesus, St. Francis and Life in the Kingdom by Jamie Arpin-Ricci

The Dangerous Act of Loving Your Neighbor: Seeing Others Through the Eyes of Jesus by Mark Labberton

July 20/21, 2013

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