

SERMON STARTER

Belong – Part 2: *The Believers Form A Community*

Biblical Text: Acts 2:42-47

1. **PROBLEM:**

The church thinks and operates more like an institution than individuals that make up a community of forgiven people who follow Jesus as our Savior and share Him with those who don't know Him. We look at the church as an organization rather than an organism. We tend to think of the church as a business rather than a family. We often focus on the church being led by superstar leaders rather than shepherds. The world is craving and hungry for an authentic community. The church is the community we all have an innate desire to be a part of.

2. **ONE THING:**

We Are the Church.

We are a community of individuals who recognize our need for Jesus as our Savior. We are the hands and feet of Jesus to one another and the lost. When we speak critically of the church doing or not doing something, we incriminate ourselves as His followers.

3. **PASSAGE QUESTION:**

How can our church be a community like the church in Acts? And what is my part? Am I doing my part to be the church, the community that God wants us to be?

4. **AGITATE THE PROBLEM:**

Internally, it is easy to think of everything wrong with the church as the problems for which the leaders are responsible. I can quickly become a consumer rather than a contributor.

As I look around at others, I may feel like I'm doing my part, but no one else is, and quickly become discouraged.

The transformation that God wants in our lives is that we are the church. Regardless of what others may do, I will be the church.

5. **DEFINE THE STAKES:**

The fellowship and community of the church will continue to shrink if we do not recognize and live as the church Jesus created us to be. As an individual, I will not; I cannot reach and live my full potential apart from the Body of Christ. The eternal life of those I know and love, my family and friends who are not following Jesus as their Savior, is on the line.

Being the church and living in the church community is God's plan for me to live His purpose and potential.

6. GUIDE:

This is the way to live a life of joy. There are and will always be problems and struggles in this life. But you can live in joy regardless of circumstances. Through faithfulness to Jesus and His Church, you can and will live in the joy of a fulfilled purpose. Each day, be it filled with good or bad, can be lived with the vigor and enthusiasm of knowing you are living as the Church – His Church. Only you can choose this for your life. Jesus has opened the door for this life. Our part is to live persistently and consistently in the activities of being the Church.

7. SIMPLE APPLICATION PLAN:

1. Be Devoted to Living God's Word
2. Prioritize meeting together
3. Worship together

8. CALL TO ACTION:

Next Step _____ As a follower of Jesus, I devote myself to regularly and continually persisting in the church community.

9. FORESHADOW THE TRANSFORMATION:

Imagine that every week as you walk in these doors, you realize that you belong; you have a place you are an integral part of the church community – enjoying the goodwill of all the people. Picture that you are living as a necessary part, a key role in changing the world for Christ. You are making a difference because you are a part of transforming our greater community by expanding God's Kingdom – the Lord adding to the fellowship of those being saved.

10. REPEAT THE ONE THING:

We Are the Church. We are Devoted to Living God's Word
We Are the Church. We prioritize meeting together
We Are the Church. We Worship together
We Are the Church.

11. REPEAT THE CALL TO ACTION:

Next Step _____ As a follower of Jesus, I devote myself to regularly and continually persisting in the church community.

We are the church. I am the church. I'm not going to be content to sit on the sidelines as a spectator, I am going to be a participate. I'm going to live in the responsibility, honor, and joy of being the church.