**Connected: Created to Belong**

**Module 4: Belonging to What?**

**Lesson 2: Belonging to a Local Body**

**Spiritual Aims**

Students will hopefully:

* be more connected with other Christians in a local body

**Lesson Objectives**

Students will:

* reconstruct what components are needed to build a community

**Materials Needed**

* 1 package of dry spaghetti noodles for approximately 10 students
* Toothpicks (a large assortment)
* At least 20 mini marshmallows per student
* At least 2 Bibles:
  + 1 bookmarked to Ephesians 2:19–22
  + 1 bookmarked to Acts 2:42–47
* Chart paper and markers for 2 groups
* Paper and pen per 4 students
* Optional: Wooden boards or hardcover books would be helpful for moving towers together
* Optional: Camera if you want to take a photo of your group’s finished project

**Pre-Lesson Preparation** (if applicable)

If your room does not normally have tables set up, you will need a workspace where students can construct their “temples”. Multiple tables are fine. This lesson begins with a construction activity, then students will leave their projects to discuss some Bible passages. They will return to their projects at the close of the lesson. Depending on your facilities and the size of your group, you may wish to organize the workspace in a separate room.

**Minds On** (approx. 10 min.)

**Leader’s note:** This activity will prepare students to think about what is needed to build a structure. This idea will be connected to what is needed to build a community later in the lesson.

**Prompt:** (If you used lesson 1 of module 4 at your last meeting) Last week we talked about being temples for the Holy Spirit. Does anybody remember what that means? (Allow students to answer.) This week we are going to begin the lesson by building some temples.

**Structure Building:**

1. Give each student the same amount of dry spaghetti, toothpicks and mini marshmallows.
2. Show them the flat surfaces where they will be building — depending on the size of your group you may need multiple “building stations”.
3. Instruct your students to build a structure, connecting the spaghetti noodles with the mini marshmallows.
4. Tell your students they will have 10 minutes to construct [teaching tip 17].

When the 10 minutes are up, ask your students to leave their structures and gather to discuss a Bible passage. Let them know they will be returning to the building stations later in the lesson.

**Action** (approx. 25 min.)

**Prompt:** Last week when we talked about belonging to God, we focused on the value that God gives us because Jesus died for us. This week we are going to think about the next step. If we all belong to God, then we all have something in common! Today we are going to talk about how to belong to God together.

Ask a volunteer to read Ephesians 2:19–22.

Divide students into 2 groups and give each group a piece of chart paper and marker. Ask 1 group to brainstorm what makes a building strong, and ask the other group to brainstorm what makes a community strong. After 5 minutes bring the groups back together, post their chart paper side by side and compare their ideas.

**Option for groups that are smaller than 8 people:** You may choose to brainstorm as 1 group. Draw a T-chart on a blank piece of chart paper, with one side labelled “building” and one labelled “community”. Ask your students to raise their hands and share ideas of what elements are needed for each category to be strong.

Ask a volunteer to read Acts 2:42–47. Ask your students if they would add anything to the “community” side after reading this passage. Again, have them raise their hands to give answers.

**Small-Group Brainstorming:**

1. Divide students into groups of 4 or 5.
2. Each group will choose a secretary and a spokesperson.
3. The secretary will collect a piece of paper and pen from you.
4. Each group will brainstorm different ways that your youth group is “built together” — what forms strong bonds between them. They can brainstorm 2 categories: things that happen already and new things that could be done.
5. The secretary will record the group’s answers on the piece of paper
6. After 10 minutes, gather all the groups back together and each spokesperson will take turns presenting their group’s answers to the other groups.

**Optional:** Is your group connected to a local church? If so, this brainstorming activity could be adapted specifically for how your students/group are connected to the church and how they could be more integrated with the local congregation.

**Ask:** These are great ideas that you came up with for building a stronger community together. The Ephesians passage we read earlier talked about being built together on the *foundation* of apostles and prophets. Do you know what the foundation of a building does?

**Suggested answer:** A foundation provides support and stability to the whole structure.

**Prompt:** If we are going to be a strong community, we need to have a strong foundation.

Still in their groups, direct your students’ attention back to the chart paper brainstorming and ask them to think about what aspects of community they would consider to be foundational. Have a designated group member place a check mark next to the ones they believe are foundational. Allow 3 to 5 minutes for discussion. Afterwards, review which ones had the most check marks.

Next, ask each group to think about what your foundation is as a church/youth group. Another way to ask this question is: What is the basic thing that unites us? After 3 to 5 minutes, the spokespeople can share their groups’ conclusions.

**Consolidate/Debrief** (approx. 15 min.)

Instruct students to combine their structures together into one huge “temple”. Depending on how sturdy the towers are, students might need help to move them and complete some repairs.

Discuss as a group what was required to combine the different towers (e.g., communication, co-operation, flexibility to accommodate different building styles and sizes).

**Prompt:** I hope you can remember this image as a symbol of this diverse and unique group God has brought together.

Ask your students to individually choose a particular aspect they want to carry out to help your group be strong.

**Optional:** You may take a photo of the combined structure and print copies as a take-home for students on a subsequent week. If you are connected with your students through social media, you could share a picture with a personalized comment during the week to check-in and encourage them.

Close in prayer, thanking God for each person and the role they have to play in your group. Ask God to help each student carry out the role they chose and to build your group stronger than ever.